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Donovan's Boy Finds Fidel Knotty, Nice

LAKE PLACID, N. Y. (AP) — John Donovan, 18-year-old son of the lawyer who negotiated the release from Cuban prisons of 26 Americans, says Cuban Premier Fidel Castro is "an intense man, but charming."

Young Donovan, son of James B. Donovan and a senior at Northwood School here, accompanied his father on a trip to Cuba April 5-9.

The youth described both the trip and Castro as "fascinating."

"We went swimming, spearfishing, drove around the countryside, visited the Bay of Pigs, but mostly we talked," young Donovan said.

"He has a magnetic personality, uses his hands a lot and rambles from the subject when he talks, but his conversations are not aimless."

The youth said he went to Cuba with his father to help him with his papers and do small favors but mostly as a companion.

But the attorney said his son's presence played an important part in bringing about

the release of the prisoners.

"Castro was enormously pleased to meet him and was completely taken by my self-confidence in bringing him," the elder Donovan said yesterday in New York City.

The son said Castro described points of interest during an automobile tour through the Cuban countryside and became quite emotional at the Bay of Pigs when describing the unsuccessful invasion there.

"We discussed broad subjects like communism at times," the youth said. "His argument for communism was logical and convincing. However, there is a distinct difference between his values and ours."

Young Donovan said Castro was a good shot with a speargun and "caught 15 fish when we went out together, one of them a 40-pounder."

Asked what was the most unusual incident of the trip, he replied:

"The whole trip was unusual. My gosh, wouldn't it be for anyone?"